

Independent Review of the Public Post-Secondary Education System in Newfoundland and Labrador

Rationale

Whereas Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic were founded in order to provide high-quality education to people in Newfoundland and Labrador; and

Whereas Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic are well-known for being leaders in degree and diploma programs in arts and sciences and in areas such as health, ocean technology, engineering, business, and other industries specific to our province, and;

Whereas capitalizing on these strengths to increase the province's profile as a global leader in and contributor to these industries and facilitating the development of a skilled workforce and pursuit of research activities to support key sectors will contribute to economic growth for our province; and

Whereas our post-secondary institutions have a vibrant culture of creativity and innovation that is reflected in teaching, research and engagement with community partners and key stakeholders, and will strengthen opportunities for growth of our industries and communities;

Government is establishing an independent review of the public post-secondary education system to provide a long-term vision for the next decade and beyond. This review will explore how our system compares to other jurisdictions and recommend options to achieve better outcomes in a more cost-efficient manner to help ensure our institutions are well-positioned as we build for our future. This includes ensuring our public post-secondary system can meet the educational and vocational needs of students, is responsive to emerging labour market demands and diversification opportunities, and will continue to contribute to the province's social, cultural and economic development and growth.

Background

Newfoundland and Labrador's public post-secondary education system consists of Memorial University (MUN) and College of the North Atlantic (CNA).

MUN includes the St. John's Campus and the Marine Institute, both in St. John's; Grenfell Campus in Corner Brook; the Labrador Institute in Happy Valley-Goose Bay; a residential campus in Harlow, England; and the Institut Frecker on the neighbouring French territory of St. Pierre et Miquelon. MUN is a comprehensive teaching and research university, enrolling approximately 18,000 full- and part-time undergraduate and graduate students annually. As Newfoundland and Labrador's university, Memorial is recognized worldwide as a top-tier post-secondary institution in teaching and learning, research, scholarship and public engagement. It conducts leading research in areas such as oceans, health, natural resources, energy and the environment, culture and heritage, contributing to the province's social and economic development and global competitiveness.

CNA is the province's public college, enrolling approximately 9,000 students annually in regular and contract training programs. It is one of the largest non-university post-secondary education and skills-training institutions in Atlantic Canada. It operates 17 campuses across the province and a campus in the Middle East State of Qatar. In addition to offering labour market relevant training programs, CNA contributes to the applied research and development activities of the province by working with local industry and community partners focusing on solving real-world problems and facilitating social and economic development and growth.

Government is operating in a challenging fiscal environment with decreased revenues and the highest per capita spending among provinces. To address the economic, social and fiscal challenges, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has developed *The Way Forward*, a roadmap to achieving a strong, diversified province with a high standard of living supported by responsive, innovative and efficient programs and services. We are driven by the goals of: managing our fiscal situation; delivering valuable programs and services; getting better outcomes for our investments; creating an environment which supports economic development and job creation; and, creating opportunities for residents to excel in their careers.

Guiding Principles

Budget Speech 2018 and phase three of *The Way Forward* committed to a review of the public post-secondary education system. This will help ensure our institutions are well-positioned to meet the educational and personal needs and expectations of students well into the future, are responsive to emerging labour market demands and diversification opportunities, and continue to contribute to the province's growth.

The results of this review will provide a long-term vision for the next decade and beyond for a public post-secondary education system that is effective, sustainable, accountable, accessible, delivers high quality education, contributes to knowledge creation and transfer and prepares post-secondary students for their future personal and professional lives.

Scope

The independent review and subsequent report will provide the strategic vision for public post-secondary education in the province for the next decade and beyond. Areas for review will include:

1. Effectiveness

Effectiveness is the degree to which objectives are achieved to meet the expected outcome.

For consideration: Is the public post-secondary system meeting the needs of Newfoundland and Labrador and are there opportunities to do more?

In the overall review of effectiveness, committee members will want to consider, among other things:

- Teaching and learning resources;
- Program flexibility;
- Success of Indigenous learners in our province and implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action;
- Institutional involvement in international education;
- Contribution to immigration;
- Aging infrastructure;
- Accreditation standards;
- Research and innovation capacity; and
- Knowledge creation, transfer and application.

2. Sustainability

Sustainability is the capacity to be supported and maintained and often refers to sufficiency of funds.

For consideration: What is reasonable in terms of the size and scope of the public post-secondary education system and its capacity for sustainability?

In the overall review of sustainability, committee members will want to consider, among other things:

- Revenue generation;
- Public investment to ensure appropriate capacity;
- Administrative/service/program integration;
- Knowledge creation, transfer, and application;
- Role in research and development
- Entrepreneurship opportunities
- Community revitalization and diversification; and
- Optimal system footprint.

3. Accountability

Accountability is the obligation of an organization to account for its activities, accept responsibility for them, and to disclose the results in a transparent manner.

For consideration: What is the optimal model for the province's public post-secondary system to facilitate high quality education, institutional autonomy, legislative compliance and financial transparency?

In the overall review of accountability, committee members will want to consider, among other things:

- Governance models;
- Institutional mandates;
- Legislation;
- Institutional structure;
- Government interaction;
- Compliance with relevant legislation, policies and procedures; and
- Adequate oversight of the development and performance of internal controls.

4. Accessibility

Accessibility is the quality of being able to be reached or entered or being easy to obtain or use.

For consideration: How can the province's public post-secondary education system best ensure opportunities for all to achieve greater diversity, increase accessibility and support more inclusiveness?

In the overall review of accessibility, committee members will want to consider, among other things:

- Supports and services;
- Recruitment
- Student financial assistance;
- Articulation agreements and procedures to facilitate learner mobility;
- Experiential learning;
- Lifelong learning opportunities; and
- Physical location, access to and usability of facilities.

Committee of Experts

To be determined

Roles and Responsibilities

- Guided by the Terms of Reference, the Committee of Experts will undertake a significant review of the province's public post-secondary education system, informed by a stakeholder consultation process to be undertaken by the Committee of Experts, and resulting in the development of a comprehensive report and recommendations.
- The Committee will consider *The Way Forward* in the development of a strategic vision of public post-secondary education for the next decade and beyond. Through the development of measurable educational goals, as guided through the scope of the review, the Committee will help ensure our public post-secondary system is well-positioned as we build for our future.
- MUN, CNA and Government will respond to requests for information from the Committee as needed.

Deliverables

The committee of experts will provide Government of Newfoundland and Labrador with a final report in winter 2020.